

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article comprising:

a core strand formed by twisting a plurality of filaments, and

a plurality of sheath strands arranged around the core strand and each formed by twisting a plurality of filaments,

(B2)
characterized in that ~~at least one of the core strand and each of~~ the sheath strands is formed by twisting one or more sheath layers made of plural filaments around a core made of one or more filaments, and ~~each~~ all of the filaments constituting an outermost sheath layer, have the same diameter, which is has a diameter larger than that a diameter of the filaments constituting at least a layer located inside the outermost sheath layer.

2. (currently amended): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article comprising a core strand formed by twisting a plurality of filaments and a plurality of sheath strands arranged around the core strand and each formed by twisting a plurality of filaments, characterized in that the core strand is formed by twisting one or two sheath layers made of plural filaments around a core made of three filaments, and all of the filaments constituting each sheath layer have the same diameter, which is a diameter larger than that a diameter of the filaments constituting a layer located inside the sheath layer.

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3. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 2,

wherein the core strand has one sheath layer and a ratio of total sectional area of all filaments
constituting the core strand to area of a circumcircle formed by filaments constituting the sheath
layer is not less than 0.715.

4. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 2,
wherein the core strand has two sheath layers and a ratio of total sectional area of all filaments
constituting the core strand to area of a circumcircle formed by filaments constituting an
outermost sheath layer is not less than 0.730.

5. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article comprising a core
strand formed by twisting a plurality of filaments and a plurality of sheath strands arranged
around the core strand and each formed by twisting a plurality of filaments, characterized in that
each of the core strand and the sheath strand is formed by twisting one or two sheath layers made
of plural filaments around a core made of three filaments, and the filaments constituting each
sheath layer have a diameter larger than that of the filament constituting a layer located inside the
sheath layer.

6. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 5,
wherein each strand has one sheath layer and a ratio of total sectional area of all filaments

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constituting the strand to area of a circumcircle formed by filaments constituting the sheath layer is not less than 0.715.

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7. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 5, wherein each strand has two sheath layers and a ratio of total sectional area of all filaments constituting the strand to area of a circumcircle formed by filaments constituting an outermost sheath layer is not less than 0.730.

8. (previously presented): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 2, wherein a distance between mutual steel filaments in each layer of the strand is not more than 0.014 mm.

9. (currently amended): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article comprising a core strand formed by twisting a plurality of filaments and a plurality of sheath strands arranged around the core strand and each formed by twisting a plurality of filaments, characterized in that the sheath strand is formed by twisting two sheath layers each made of plural filaments around a core made of ~~one or more~~ three filaments, all of the filaments constituting an outermost sheath layer have the same diameter, and when a diameter of a filament constituting an outermost sheath layer in the sheath strand is ϕ_s (mm) and a diameter of a circumcircle inscribing all filaments in the outermost sheath layer is Φ (mm), they satisfy a

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relation of $0.55 \leq \Phi/6.14\phi_s \leq 0.90$, and when a diameter of a filament constituting an outermost sheath layer in the core strand is ϕ_c (mm), it satisfies a relation of $\phi_s \leq \phi_c$.

10. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein all filaments other than filaments constituting the outermost sheath layer in the sheath strands has the same diameter.

11. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein all filaments other than filaments constituting the core in the sheath strands have the same diameter.

12. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein all filaments other than filaments constituting an outermost sheath layer in the core strand have the same diameter.

13. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein all diameter other than filaments constituting the core in the core stand have the same diameter.

14. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein all filaments constituting the core strand have the same diameter.

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15. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein filaments constituting the outermost sheath layer in the sheath strand have a diameter of 0.20-0.50 mm.

16. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein the filaments have a tensile strength of not less than 3000 MPa.

17. (currently amended): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein the cord has a cord construction formed by arranging six sheath strands around one core strand, each of these sheath strands has a construction formed by arranging two sheath layers made of plural filaments around a core made of three filaments.

18. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein a twisting direction of the outermost sheath layer in the sheath strand is the same as that of the sheath strand.

19. (original): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 9, wherein the cord has a wrapping filament helically wound along an outer periphery of the cord.

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20. (currently amended): A tire comprising a carcass toroidally extending between a pair of bead portions as a skeleton and a belt disposed on an outside of the carcass in a radial direction and comprised of plural belt layers, ~~characterized in that and steel cords as claimed in claim 1 are applied to at least one of the carcass and the belt layers,~~

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wherein the steel cords comprise a cores strand formed by twisting a plurality of filaments, wherein at least one of the core strand and the sheath strands is formed by twisting one or more sheath layers made of plural filaments around a core made of one or more filaments, and each of the filaments constituting an outermost sheath layer has a diameter larger than that of the filaments constituting at least a layer located inside the outermost sheath layer.

21. (previously presented): A steel cord for the reinforcement of a rubber article according to claim 5, wherein a distance between mutual steel filaments in each layer of the strand is not more than 0.014 mm.